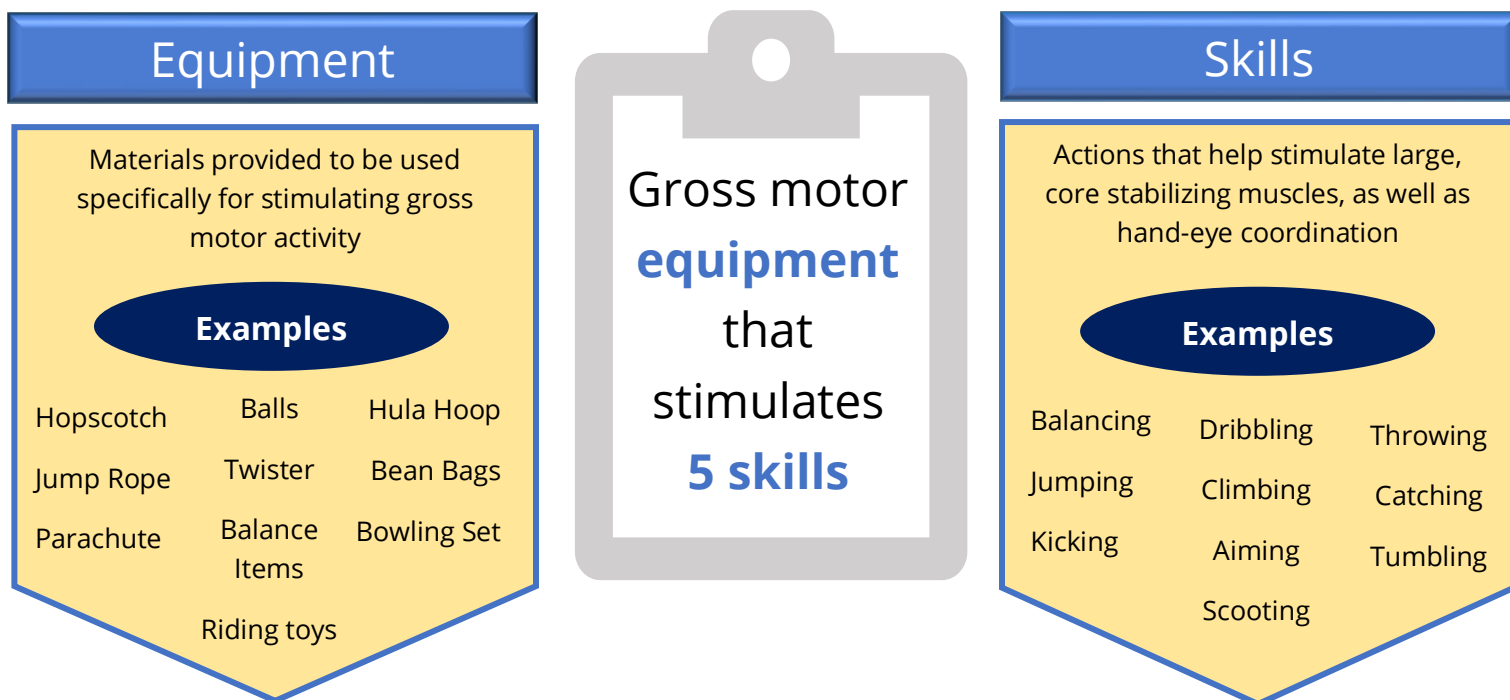


Gross Motor Equipment for Inclement Weather Days

Gross motor play with equipment in early childhood settings is essential for supporting children's physical, social, and cognitive development. Play with this type of equipment helps strengthen large muscle groups, improve coordination, and develop essential motor skills. These activities also promote spatial awareness and encourage children to take manageable risks, building confidence and independence. Equipment-based play fosters social interaction as children learn to take turns, cooperate, and engage in imaginative group play. Also, it supports overall health by encouraging active movement, which helps establish lifelong habits of physical activity.

This document clarifies the requirements for children's use of gross motor equipment on days when they cannot play outdoors. For all the Environment Rating Scales, please note that gross motor equipment should be appropriate for the age group in care and used during the observation. Additionally, for the ITERS-3, ECERS-3, and SACERS-U specifically, gross motor equipment that stimulates at least 5 skills is required on inclement weather days.



Please note that these are a few examples of equipment and skills, but this is not a complete list of all possible types of skills or equipment that can be used to earn credit. Choose equipment that is interesting to the children and allows them to be creative.

Helpful Hints to Make it Work

- Equipment that does the same thing does not earn credit for additional skills. For example, beanbags and balls both stimulate throwing and catching unless accompanied by a basket or something to aim at in which case an additional skill of aiming can be counted.
- Planning helps. Think about where gross motor activities will occur, where the equipment is stored, and how it will be set it up. Consider using small portable activities that are stored together for easy access and retrieval.

Common Misconceptions

- Teachers often offer activities such as running, exercising, marching, and dancing with musical instruments or streamers on days when outdoor play does not occur. Although these offer physical activity, none of them involve the use of gross motor equipment.
- Sometimes one or two types of gross motor equipment is provided indoors when outdoor play does not occur; however, enough equipment to have choices and stimulate 5 different skills is required.

Keep in mind equipment and skill development will vary depending on the ages and developmental levels of the children in your care. Below are some examples of equipment and skills that could be incorporated on days when outside play does not occur.

